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STATE FOR SCA/CEN, OES
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [TSPL](#) [BEXP](#) [KSCA](#) [KZ](#)
SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: REQUEST FOR TWO SCIENCE FELLOWS

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: Post requests the assistance of two Embassy Science Fellows for a two-week period from mid-August through September 2009. The Fellows will work in Astana, Kazakhstan, under the supervision of the Political-Economic Section. The Fellows must have knowledge of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), and have practical experience in the operation of a National Notification Authority and Enquiry Point office. No medical or security clearance is required. The majority of the Fellows' work will be conducted in host country government facilities. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) As part of its WTO accession process, Kazakhstan has passed legislation to establish an Enquiry Point and National Notification Authority, as required by the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. However, Kazakhstan has struggled with implementation, due to the large number of food safety and trade ministries that must be involved in drafting SPS domestic measures and monitoring the measures of other trade partners. The purpose of this proposal is to provide Enquiry Point and National Notification training that will enable Kazakhstan to better understand the obligations and mechanisms of the WTO SPS Agreement and better comply with transparency provisions. This would strengthen U.S. market access as well as Kazakhstan's ability to engage in trade. This training will assist Kazakhstan to develop mechanisms within its government that focus on private sector input and public and inter-agency coordination. The training will also facilitate Kazakhstan's ability to address other technical barriers to trade, such as veterinary certificates that serve as de facto import licensing and labeling issues -- especially on genetically modified organisms -- that may also limit U.S. meat, poultry, cereal, and processed food exports to countries.

13. (SBU) Early recognition of human capital issues by WTO accession candidates such as Kazakhstan will help avoid overly-severe solutions, zero-tolerance policies, and other unscientifically-based entry requirements. For these reasons, it is imperative that the U.S. Government provide this proposed training to assist Kazakhstani officials develop and strengthen their SPS Enquiry Point and National Notification Offices. This will help avoid significant trade impediments in the near future, and promote greater transparency in the multilateral trading system.

14. (SBU) The fact that Kazakhstan recently announced it would be suspending its effort to accede individually to the WTO and instead work on acceding jointly with Russia and Belarus as part of a customs union does not, in our view, obviate the need to provide the Kazakhstanis with WTO SPS assistance.

¶5. (SBU) The Embassy Science Fellows are needed for a two-week period from mid-August through September 2009. The training must be completed by September 25, 2009. Post recommends Evelyn Alexander and Roseanne Freese, from the U.S. SPS Enquiry Point and National Notification Point office, be selected for the fellowships. Post also proposes that during the first week, the fellows deliver presentations on WTO SPS Agreement and Enquiry Point and National Notification Authority provisions under the SPS Agreement, and meet with Kazakhstani government officials from ministries involved in regulating for human, animal and plant health, in order to learn about the current state of play. During the second week, the Fellows will conduct workshops on improving coordination and transparency in the operation of an Enquiry Point and National Notification Authority.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

¶6. (SBU) Embassy Economics Officer Bryan Wockley will supervise the Embassy Science Fellows. Post will schedule meetings with relevant host government officials and provide local transportation. USDA/Washington will pay for local transportation, hotel, and per diem related expenses.

¶7. (SBU) The Regional Security Officer has reviewed and approved this request.

¶8. (SBU) The Embassy point of contact is Bryan Wockley, Economics Officer, who may be reached at 7 7172 70 2100 or wockleybg@state.gov.

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